

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

In the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A protective layer comprising a viscoelastic foam substrate and a ~~formed skin~~, said ~~formed skin~~ at least partially enclosing said foam substrate, said skin having a plurality of vent holes provided therein, said vent holes providing fluid communication between the ambient environment and a portion of the surface of said foam substrate that is located proximate said vent holes.
2. (original) A protective layer according to claim 1, said foam substrate comprising a flexible foam having a glass transition temperature less than 50°C.
3. (original) A protective layer according to claim 1, said foam substrate comprising a flexible foam having a glass transition temperature of 0-40°C.
4. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said ~~formed skin~~ being formed integrally with said foam substrate.
5. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said ~~formed skin~~ being separately provided from said foam substrate and being subsequently ~~molded~~ molded thereto.
6. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said foam substrate comprising flexible polyurethane foam, said ~~formed skin~~ comprising a formable thermoplastic.
7. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said foam substrate comprising a resilient an open cell foam.

8. (original) A protective layer according to claim 7, said open cell foam being flexible polyurethane.

9. (original) A protective layer according to claim 7, said open cell foam being semi-rigid polyurethane.

Claim 10: (canceled)

11. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said ~~formed-skin~~ having a first protective zone and a second protective zone, each said protective zone of said ~~formed-skin~~ having a plurality of vent holes provided therein effective to regulate the rigidity of said protective layer adjacent said protective zone, said protective layer being more rigid adjacent said first protective zone than adjacent said second protective zone by virtue of the relative size and/or density of vent holes provided in said first protective zone compared to in said second protective zone.

Claim 12: (canceled)

13. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 11, said protective layer being a seamless protective layer across both said first and said second protective zones, ~~and being more rigid adjacent said first protective zone than adjacent said second protective zone.~~

Claims 14-15: (canceled)

16. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim ~~[[15]]~~ 1, said ~~viscoelastic polymeric foam~~ substrate having a density of $104 \text{ kg/m}^3 \pm 30\%$.

17. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said foam substrate comprising a partially closed-cell polymeric ~~viscoelastic~~ foam.

18. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said protective layer being a seamless protective layer and having a first protective zone and a second protective zone, said protective layer being more rigid adjacent said first protective zone than adjacent said second protective zone, said foam substrate being seamless in the region of said first and said second protective zones.

19. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said ~~formed-skin~~ having a porosity at least 10% lower than an outer surface of said foam substrate.

20. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said foam substrate comprising at least a partially open cell foam, said foam substrate being effective to recover to a substantial proportion of its original shape following ~~destructive~~ deformation thereof resulting from an impact to said protective layer.

21. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim ~~[[20]]~~ 1, said foam substrate being effective to recover to at least ~~50%~~ 90% its original shape following ~~said destructive deformation thereof~~ from a high speed impact.

22. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 1, said foam substrate comprising at least a partially open cell foam, wherein said protective layer exhibits energy absorptive properties of a flexible or semi-rigid foam at impact speeds less than 5 mph thereby being effective to absorb impact energy through non-destructive, recoverable deformation of the foam substrate, and wherein said protective layer exhibits energy absorptive properties of a rigid foam at impact speeds greater than ~~[[25]]~~ 15 mph thereby being effective to dissipate and absorb impact energy through ~~destructive~~ deformation of the foam substrate.

23. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 22, said foam substrate being effective to recover to a substantial proportion of its original shape following ~~destructive~~ deformation thereof resulting from an impact to said protective layer at a speed of greater than 15 mph.

24. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim ~~[[22]]~~ 23, said foam substrate being effective to recover to at least ~~50%~~ 90% its original shape following said ~~destructive~~ deformation thereof.

25. (original) A protective layer according to claim 22, said open cell foam being flexible polyurethane.

26. (original) A protective layer according to claim 22, said open cell foam being semi-rigid polyurethane.

27. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 22, said ~~formed~~ skin having a first protective zone and a second protective zone, each said protective zone of said ~~formed~~ skin having a plurality of vent holes provided therein effective to regulate the local rigidity of said protective layer adjacent said protective zone.

28. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim ~~[[22]]~~ 27, said protective layer being more rigid adjacent said first protective zone than adjacent said second protective zone.

29. (currently amended) A protective layer according to claim 22, said foam substrate ~~protective layer~~ being ~~[[a]]~~ seamless ~~protective layer~~, and in the region of said first and said second protective zones, said protective layer being more rigid adjacent said first protective zone than adjacent said second protective zone.

30. (new) A protective layer according to claim 1, said viscoelastic foam substrate being a semi-rigid viscoelastic foam.

31. (new) A protective layer according to claim 30, said semi-rigid viscoelastic foam being a polyurethane foam.